

TEST PREPARATION AND ADMINISTRATION PRACTICES

Arizona Assessment Program

In general, the best preparation for AIMS and/or the norm-referenced test is good instruction. This can be broadly defined as instruction in the content specified in the Arizona Academic Standards. The instructional program should ensure that students are able to demonstrate mastery of the content standards.

PROPER TEST PREPARATION AND ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES

- Viewing all directions for administration before the test is administered and following the directions for administering consistently and in detail throughout the testing procedure.
- Conducting reviews or drills that use identically formatted items that cover skills and knowledge in a domain but do not focus solely on the specific items or objectives tested.
- Sharing scoring rubrics and sample papers with students to help them evaluate their own writing.
- Teaching to the Arizona Academic Standards, i.e., aligning both the curricula and instruction with the Standards.
- Training students to develop skills and strategies, such as marking answer sheets or budgeting time, to increase their proficiency at taking a variety of tests rather than to prepare them for a specific test.
- Discussing the importance, purpose, and intended use of the test with students.
- Checking answer sheets to make sure that each has been properly completed, that demographics are properly completed, and that erasures are clean.
- Translating or paraphrasing directions. (Refer to “Administration of AIMS HS, AIMS DPA and TerraNova to Students Requiring Accommodations”) All directions for administration should be viewed before hand and followed consistently and in detail throughout the testing procedure.
- Remove any materials from students’ desks or classroom walls that students could see to assist them in answering a specific test item.

IMPROPER TEST PREPARATION AND ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES

- Conducting reviews or drills that use actual test items.
- Previewing any secure forms of the test for the purpose of teaching the knowledge or skill.
- Leaving materials in view of the students that would help them to get a correct answer.
- Limiting instruction exclusively to test items rather than defining instruction by the content standards measured.
- Using practice tests and sample test items prepared by commercial enterprises solely for the purpose of raising the scores with minimal focus on teaching the knowledge and skills the test is designed to measure.
- Translating or paraphrasing words on test items. (Refer to “Administration of AIMS HS, AIMS DPA and TerraNova to Students Requiring Accommodations”)
- Disclosing test items to students prior to testing.
- Changing a student’s answer, or coaching a student on an item, or prompting a student to change an answer.
- Any practice that is designed to simply raise students’ test scores without also increasing students’ skills and knowledge.

An Ethics Litmus Test*

Does the test preparation practice inflate student scores beyond the scores that actually reflect the knowledge of the domain which the test is designed to sample? In other words, would you use the test preparation materials because they support your instructional materials rather than just because the items might be virtually identical to state mandated test items?

Yes

No

* The Ethics Litmus Test can be applied to practices that are not specifically addressed in the preceding list. Test preparation practices that generate “Yes” responses should be discontinued.